

was abandoned and greater efforts were made to secure settlers.

Valentinian settled German prisoners in the valley of the Po.¹

In the time of Honorius, in Campania five hundred thousand

arpents were discharged from the *fiscus* as deserted and waste. In the third century, if the colon ran away from land

which no one would take he was pursued by all the agencies of the law and brought back like a criminal.² The colons ran away

because the *curiales*, their masters, put on them the taxes which the state levied first on the *curiales*? What was wanted was

men. The Roman imperial system had made men scarce by making life hard. Pliny said that the *latifundia* destroyed Italy.

The saying has been often quoted in modern times as if it had some unquestionable authority. It is a case of the common

error of confusing cause and consequence. The *latifundia* were

a consequence and a symptom. Heisterbergk⁴ thinks that the *latifundia* were not produced by economic causes, but by vanity

and ostentation. The owners did not look to the land for revenue.

He asks⁵ how a strictly scientific system of grand culture with

plenty of labor could ruin
 any country. Rodbertus⁶
 thinks that
 the *latifundia* went from a
 grand system to a petty
 system
 between the times of the
 elder and the younger Pliny
 by the
 operation of the law of rent.
 He thinks that there must
 have
 been garden culture in Italy
 at the beginning of the
 empire, and
 that the colonate arose from
 big estates with petty
 industry and
 from the law of mortgage.
 He thinks, further, that the
 colons,
 until the fourth century, were
 slaves, and that their status
 was
 softened by the legislation of
 the fourth century.
 Heisterbergk
 thinks that the colonate
 began in the corn provinces,
 and that it
 was, at the beginning of the
 fourth century, on the point of
 pass-
 ing away, but the legislation
 of the fourth century
 perpetuated
 it. He thinks that it was
 injured, as an institution, by
 the great
 increase of taxation after
 Diocletian. Then legislation
 was
 necessary to keep the colons
 on the land.⁷

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Am. Marcel., XXVIII, 5.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 63.

² Moreau-Christophe, *Le Droit h*
FOisvuet, 274.

⁶ *Hildeb. Ztsft.*, 206.

³ Rodbertus, *Hildeb. Ztsft.*, II, 241.

⁷ *Colonat*, 143.

* *Colonat*, 67.